

POLITICAL FEATURE NO. 1-0079
EDWARD CONLEY

FEBRUARY 2, 1976

DETENTE: SALT AND ANGOLA

ANNCR:

A MAJOR ADVANCE IN THE PROCESS OF EASING EAST-WEST TENSIONS...THE AMERICAN-SOVIET STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TALKS... AND A POTENTIALLY MAJOR DETERRENT TO THE PROCESS OF DETENTE...SOVIET INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA...WERE DISCUSSED BY EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN SCHOLARS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS RECENTLY AT A CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON. VOA'S EDWARD CONLEY REPORTS:

VOICE:

THE OCCASION WAS THE THIRD QUADRANGULAR CONFERENCE (WITH PARTICIPANTS FROM WESTERN EUROPE, THE UNITED STATES, CANADA AND JAPAN) CONDUCTED BY THE CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES IN WASHINGTON. ONE OF THE MAJOR TOPICS DISCUSSED WAS DETENTE... THAT PROCESS OF EASING TENSIONS BETWEEN THE WEST AND THE SOVIET UNION WITH THE ULTIMATE GOAL AVOIDANCE OF WAR. THERE WERE MIXED REACTIONS AS TO WHAT THE NEW EAST-WEST APPROACH OF THE NINETEEN SEVENTIES HAS ACCOMPLISHED, EVEN CONCERNING ITS MOST PUBLICIZED AND PROMISING VENTURE... THE LIMITATION OF AMERICAN AND SOVIET STRATEGIC NUCLEAR ARMS.

STATE DEPARTMENT COUNSELLOR HELMUT SONNENFELDT, WHO ACCOMPANIED SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER ON HIS RECENT TRIP TO MOSCOW, TOLD THE CONFERENCE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS HAD BEEN REACHED REGARDING A SALT TWO AGREEMENT. BUT HE HESITATED TO PREDICT THAT COMPLETE ACCORD IS IMMINENT:

TAPE...SONNENFELDT...:40

"THE RECENT TRIP MADE SOME SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IS DEALING WITH OUTSTANDING SALT ISSUES. THE RECENT TRIP DID NOT REACH COMPLETE AGREEMENT ON THOSE ISSUES AND MORE NEGOTIATION IS GOING TO HAVE TO TAKE PLACE BEFORE ONE CAN TELL WHETHER IT IS POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE AN AGREEMENT ON SALT IN THE NEAR FUTURE OR INDEED LATER ON. BUT THERE WAS PROGRESS ON PREVIOUSLY TOTALLY INTRACTABLE ISSUES. THERE WAS SOME QUITE INTERESTING MOVEMENT FORWARD BY THE SOVIET SIDE."

VOICE:

FORMER UNITED STATES DEFENSE SECRETARY JAMES SCHLESINGER WAS SKEPTICAL OF SOVIET INTENTIONS IN THE SALT NEGOTIATIONS. HE SAID THE UNITED STATES MUST MAINTAIN AN OVERALL ARMS BALANCE WITH THE SOVIET UNION, NOT ONLY IN THE NUCLEAR FIELD BUT ALSO IN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONRY. AND MISTER SCHLESINGER WARNED THAT WISHFUL THINKING ABOUT DETENTE ON THE PART OF THE WEST COULD EVENTUALLY LEAD TO SOVIET WEAPON SUPERIORITY.

TAPE: SCHLESINGER...1:20

"THE SOVIETS SEEK IN THE ARMS COMPETITION THE ACQUISITION OF UNILATERAL ADVANTAGE WHICH THEY PLEDGED AWAY IN THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF AGREEMENT DURING THE MOSCOW CONFERENCE. I THINK ONE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT DETENTE HAS SUBSTANTIAL ADVANTAGES FOR THE SOVIET UNION IN THE POLITICAL REALM. THAT DETENTE HAS CONTRIBUTED TO A FEELING THAT SINCE CONFLICT IS FORECLOSED THAT THE WEST CAN DISARM. THAT IN ITSELF CONTRIBUTES TO THAT SHIFT IN THE CORRELATION OF FORCES IN BEHALF OF THE SOVIET UNION AND IN THE LONG RUN WOULD SERVE TO THE ACCUMULATION OF POWER FOR THE SOVIETS. ARMS NEGOTIATIONS TEND TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE ATMOSPHERE AND THE ATMOSPHERICS OF DETENTE. AND CONSEQUENTLY, ARMS NEGOTIATIONS HAVE AN ADDITIONAL PURPOSE FOR THE SOVIETS..WHICH IS TO MAINTAIN THE ATMOSPHERE OF DETENTE FOR WHATEVER PERIOD IT CONTINUES TO SERVE SOVIET PURPOSES."

VOICE:

CONRAD AHLERS, A WEST GERMAN PARLIAMENTARIAN SERVING ON THE PANEL, EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER WHAT HE CALLED AN ALLIED WEAKNESS IN CONVENTIONAL FORCES IN WESTERN EUROPE AS COMPARED

THE SOVIET-AMERICAN STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TALKS AS A STEP TOWARD PEACE, OR AT LEAST THE AVOIDANCE OF NUCLEAR EXCHANGE.

TAPE: AHLERS...1:10

"THE TIMES ARE OVER DURING WHICH THE EUROPEANS WERE AFRAID OF THE BI-LATERAL NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON ON SALT. WE ARE NOT ANXIOUS ANY MORE THAT SOMETHING IS HAPPENING BEHIND OUR BACK AND THE SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE AND OF COURSE THE SECRETARIES OF STATE OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE LAST YEAR...ALL OF THEM HAVE DONE MORE THAN THEIR DUTY, I WOULD SAY, TO GIVE US THE FEELING THAT WE CAN RELY ON THE UNITED STATES AS AN ALLY EVEN IN THESE VERY COMPLICATED DISARMAMENT TALKS. ON THE CONTRARY, I WOULD SAY THAT OUR PEOPLE AND OUR VOTERS...THEY ARE VERY MUCH IN FAVOR OF ANY ATTEMPT TO GET A SALT AGREEMENT. THEY WOULD THINK AND I HOPE THEY WOULD CORRECTLY THINK THAT IT WOULD BE A STEP MORE TO PEACE...TO A PERMANENT PEACE IN THIS WORLD OR AT LEAST TO AVOID A NUCLEAR EXCHANGE."

VOICE:

WHILE THERE WAS A GENERALLY OPTIMISTIC VIEW AMONG THE PANELISTS THAT SALT NEGOTIATIONS COULD LEAD TO AN IMMENSELY POSITIVE PRODUCT OF DETENTE, THERE WAS ALSO A CONCERN THAT THE ARMS LIMITATION TALKS, INDEED THE WHOLE PROCESS OF EASING EAST-WEST TENSIONS, ARE BEING THREATENED BY A NEW AND SERIOUS ISSUE-- SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN THE NEW AFRICAN NATION OF ANGOLA. STATE DEPARTMENT COUNSELLOR SONNENFELDT REPORTED THAT THE MATTER HAD BEEN THE BASIS OF SERIOUS TALKS DURING RECENT AMERICAN-SOVIET NEGOTIATIONS IN MOSCOW. HE WARNED THAT ACTIONS SUCH AS SOVIET INTERFERENCE IN ANGOLA COULD UNDO THE PROCESS OF DETENTE... THAT HISTORICALLY, WHEN TWO POWERS CONTINUE TO DISAGREE OVER AN ISSUE, IT SOONER OR LATER LEADS TO CONFLICT.

TAPE: SONNENFELDT... 1:15

"THE SECRETARY OF STATE USED THE OCCASION OF HIS MOSCOW VISIT TO STATE VERY FORCEFULLY OUR VIEW OF WHAT IS AT STAKE IN ANGOLA. IT'S NOT A TRIVIAL MATTER THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE WHAT HAPPENED IN EASTERN EUROPE AT THE END OF THE WAR IT APPEARS AS THOUGH A MINORITY REGIME IS GOING TO BE IMPOSED ON A COUNTRY BY FORCE OF SOVIET AND IN THIS CASE CUBAN ARMS. THAT IS A NEW DEVELOPMENT AND IT HAPPENS TO BE THE FIRST TIME THAT AN ADMINISTRATION HAS NOT RECEIVED BACKING FROM THE CONGRESS IN DEALING WITH THAT KIND OF A PROBLEM. WE MADE CLEAR TO THE SOVIETS THAT WHATEVER MAY HAPPEN, SOONER OR LATER... IN THE HISTORY OF GREAT POWER RELATIONSHIPS, WHEN SUCH PERHAPS MARGINAL SHIFTS OCCUR IN THE POWER RELATIONSHIP, THE OTHER SUPERPOWER---THE OTHER ACTOR---IS GOING TO LOOK FOR AND FIND COMPENSATION. AND IF WE'RE GOING TO PROCEED ALONG THAT ROUTE WE'RE GOING TO BE PRISONERS OF THE IRON LAW THAT SOONER OR LATER THERE'S GOING TO BE CONFLICT."

VOICE:

IS DETENTE WORKING? OR IS IT FAILING? ACCORDING TO THE PANELISTS IT DEPENDS ON WHETHER ONE BELIEVES DETENTE SHOULD BE ACCCOMPANIED BY A RELAXATION OF THE SOVIET UNION'S INTERNAL AND INTERNATIONAL POLICIES. AND THE SCHOLARS AND PANEL MEMBERS ATTENDING THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE WERE NOT IN AGREEMENT ON THOSE QUESTIONS. PERHAPS THE MAIN CONCLUSION OF THE CONFERENCE WAS THAT FALSE ILLUSIONS IN THE WEST AS TO WHAT COULD BE EXPECTED UNDER THE PROCESS KNOWN AS DETENTE HAS LED TO SKEPTICISM. AND, AS NATHANIEL SAMUELS...CHAIRMAN OF THE CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES WHICH SPONSORED THE MEETING SUMMED UP: DETENTE HAS PRODUCED MORE ANXIETY ABOUT U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS TODAY THAN WHEN THE PROCESS STARTED.

(OPT) TAPE: SAMUELS...1:33

"I WOULD SAY THAT THIS SKEPTICISM ABOUT DETENTE HAS PUT US IN A POSITION WHERE THERE'S PROBABLY MORE CONCERN, MORE WORRY, MORE ANXIETY ABOUT THE U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONSHIP TODAY THAN PROBABLY WHEN WE STARTED THIS PROCESS TWO OR THREE YEARS AGO. AND I BELIEVE THIS SKEPTICISM ARISES FROM THE FACT THAT WE HAVE NOT MET PERHAPS THREE OVERALL TESTS THAT HAVE BEEN BROUGHT OUT IN THESE MEETINGS. ONE: I WOULD SAY THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HELSINKI...PARTICULARLY AS IT RELATES TO EXPANDING HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS EAST AND WEST. SECOND: ANGOLA..., THE TEST OF DETENTE IN ANGOLA HAS CERTAINLY NOT BEEN SUCCESSFULLY SURMOUNTED AS YET. THIRD: I THINK THE OVERALL LEVEL OF MODERATION ON THE PART OF BOTH AND CERTAINLY IN OUR PERCEPTIONS IN THE WEST ON THE PART OF THE SOVIETS AS TO THE STRENGTH OF THE BUILDUP, THE SPEED OF IT, THE AIMS, THE MOTIVATIONS, AND THE DIFFICULTIES ON BOTH SIDES OF FINDING THE AREAS OF COMPROMISE."

VOICE:

THE RESULTS OF A RECENTLY HELD WASHINGTON CONFERENCE OF SCHOLARS AND OFFICIALS, DEBATING THE QUESTION OF DETENTE.

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